

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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TO AMEMBASSY RANGOON PRIORITY
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USIA WASHDC PRIORITY

UNCLAS HONG KONG 1320

RANGOON FOR SCOTTON

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SNAR, HK, BM
SUBJECT: MATHEA FALCO STATEMENT

STATE FOR S/NM
USIA FOR IBS/BURMESE SERVICE; IPS
REF: RANGOON 264

1. USIS HONG KONG RELEASED THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT TO
LOCAL AND WIRE SERVICE PRESS, THURSDAY, JANUARY 26 AT
1100 LOCAL TIME.

2. QUOTE

U.S. OFFICIALS VISIT BURMA

SENIOR ADVISER TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INTERNATIONAL
NARCOTICS MATTERS, MS. MATHEA FALCO; DEPUTY ASSISTANT
SECRETARY OF STATE ROBERT OAKLEY; AND WHITE HOUSE
NARCOTICS ADVISER CHARLES O'KEEFE HAVE RECENTLY COMPLETED
A HIGHLY USEFUL FOUR-DAY VISIT TO BURMA. EXTENSIVE TALKS
WERE HELD WITH BURMESE OFFICIALS REGARDING THE SUPPRESSION
OF ILLICIT NARCOTICS PRODUCTION AND TRAFFIC AS WELL
AS DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION AND REHABILITATION. THE VISIT PROVIDED
AN OPPORTUNITY FOR A FRANK EXCHANGE OF VIEWS AND ENABLED
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THE U.S. OFFICIALS TO OBSERVE FIRST-HAND THE BURMESE GOVERNMENT'S
VITAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE WORLD-WIDE STRUGGLE AGAINST ILLICIT
NARCOTICS.
THROUGH A SERIES OF SUCCESSFUL ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS,
THE BURMESE GOVERNMENT HAS DEMONSTRATED ITS SINCERE
COMMITMENT TO THE ERADICATION OF ILLICIT NARCOTICS
PRODUCTION AND TRAFFICKING WITHIN ITS BORDERS.

ILLUSTRATIVE OF THESE EFFORTS WAS THE SEIZURE LAST AUGUST OF 675 KILOS OF NARCOTICS, ONE OF THE LARGEST DRUG SEIZURES IN HISTORY. MORE RECENTLY, BURMESE AUTHORITIES HAVE DESTROYED OVER 5,000 ACRES OF ILLICIT POPPY FIELDS. IN ADDITION, THE BURMESE GOVERNMENT HAS UNDERTAKEN AN INTENSIVE COUNTRYWIDE DRUG PREVENTION CAMPAIGN TO EDUCATE ITS PEOPLE, PARTICULARLY YOUTH, TO THE TERRIBLE PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL COSTS OF DRUG ABUSE. ALSO IMPRESSIVE ARE THE DRUG TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WHICH HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED AT SUCH INSTITUTIONS AS THE PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL IN RANGOON AND THE SAO SAN HTUN HOSPITAL IN TAUNGKY. THERE WAS A TIME WHEN DRUG ABUSE WAS THOUGHT TO BE EXCLUSIVELY AN AMERICAN PROBLEM. THIS IS NO LONGER THE CASE, IF EVER IT WAS. DRUG ABUSE HAS BECOME A GLOBAL PROBLEM WHICH AFFECTS THE DEVELOPING NATIONS AS WELL AS THE MORE AFFLUENT. THIS HAS BEEN WELL RECOGNIZED IN BURMA AND OTHER COUNTRIES. THE U.S. GOVERNMENT IS DEEPLY IMPRESSED WITH THE COMMITMENT AND DEDICATION SHOWN BY THE BURMESE GOVERNMENT IN SUPPRESSING ILLICIT NARCOTICS. DESPITE BURMA'S SUCCESSES AND THOSE OF OTHER COUNTRIES, THE VOLUME OF ILLICIT NARCOTICS REMAINS HIGH; AND DRUG ABUSE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, EUROPE, AND THE U.S. COUNTRIES CONTINUES TO BE A MOST SERIOUS

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PROBLEM. WORLDWIDE EFFORTS TO REDUCE BOTH THE ILLICIT NARCOTICS SUPPLY AND DEMAND MUST BE INTENSIFIED. THE BURMESE HAVE ALREADY DEMONSTRATED THEIR RECOGNITION OF THIS REALITY BY THEIR SUSTAINED ANTI-NARCOTICS EFFORTS. UNQUOTE

3. COPIES OF USIS TEXT POUCHED TO ADDRESSEES.
SHOESMITH

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